

OpenTheGovernment.org

Americans for Less Secrecy, More Democracy

Steering Committee

March 14, 2005

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American Scientists*

Andy Alexander
*American Society
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(Ex-officio member)*

Carol Andress
Environmental Defense

Mary Alice Baish
*American Association
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*Society of Professional
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*People For
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Reece Rushing
*Center for
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Peg Seminario
AFL-CIO

David Sobel
*Electronic Privacy
Information Center*

*co-chairs

The Honorable John Cornyn
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510
Sent via fax: 202-228-2281

Dear Senator Cornyn:

OpenTheGovernment.org is pleased to support the Openness Promotes Effectiveness in our National Government Act of 2005 (OPEN Government Act, or S. 394). We would also like to express appreciation for your leadership in strengthening freedom of information in the federal government.

For decades, the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) has served as a backstop guarantee that the public had a right to know what its government was doing with taxpayer dollars. Unfortunately, FOIA's effectiveness is limited by unnecessary delays, too few resources devoted to fulfilling FOIA's promise, and little recourse when agencies improperly deny a request.

If enacted, the OPEN Government Act of 2005 will address many weaknesses in how agencies implement FOIA. It will give the public significant new tools to hold government accountable and obtain information we need to make our communities and families safer.

OpenTheGovernment.org is an unprecedented coalition of 38 groups and other Americans, including journalists, consumer and good government groups, environmentalists, labor and others working to strengthen open government and fight secrecy. We're focused on making the federal government a more open place to make us safer, strengthen public trust in government, and support our democratic principles.

We applaud your effort to strengthen the Freedom of Information Act. We look forward to working with you on more good steps to promote open government at the federal level.

Sincerely,

Rick Blum
Director

cc: Sen. Patrick Leahy

For more information or
to get involved, contact:

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